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Sen. Brown to speak at dedication ceremony for Purple Heart Trail in Branch County

LANSING – State Sen. Cameron S. Brown will participate in a ceremony to dedicate a portion of I-69 as the “Purple Heart Trail” Monday, July 17 near Coldwater.

Because highway designations must be passed by the Michigan Legislature and signed into law by the governor, Brown sponsored legislation in 2004 to officially rename the stretch of the highway running through Branch County in honor of those who received the Purple Heart Medal.

“It is important that we honor those who have served our country and shed blood for our freedom,” said Brown, R-Fawn River Township. “This ceremony will be the culmination of a lot of hard work by many people, but most importantly it will be an opportunity to honor our nation’s greatest patriots.”

Brown will speak about the sacrifices made by service personnel awarded the Purple Heart. Commander Del Turner, of the Military Order of the Purple Heart, will also be attending the ceremony.

The Purple Heart is awarded to members of the armed forces of the United States who have been wounded in combat. This medal is also awarded posthumously to the next of kin of those who have been killed in action or die from wounds received in action. The honor is the world’s oldest military decoration in present use and the first American award made available to the common soldier. It was initially created as the Badge of Military Merit by General George Washington.

The dedication ceremony is scheduled for 11:30 a.m. at the first rest stop on I-69, five miles north of the Indiana/Michigan border. The Purple Heart Highway marker has already been placed at this location.

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